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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9190  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 2989  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2346  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2110  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 5267  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2191  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5584  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9180  
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 0821  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6758  
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 1857  
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 2235  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 0705  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2561  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4567  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000408

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP, OES, G/AIAG  
PACOM FOR FPA  
USDA FOR FAS/PECAD, FAS/CNMP, FAS/AAD, APHIS  
BANGKOK FOR USAID:JMACARTHUR, APHIS:RTANAKA, REO:HHOWARD  
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO HHS FOR OGHA  
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PINR, AMGT, BM  
SUBJECT: BURMA: NO NEW A/H1N1 CASES; MOH ISSUES NEW TESTING  
GUIDELINES

REF: RANGOON 402

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Classified By: Economic Officer Samantha A. Carl-Yoder for Reasons 1.4  
(b and d).

Summary  
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1. (C) Ministry of Health (MOH) officials continue to aver that there are no confirmed cases of A/H1N1 in Burma other than the one announced last week, and they are denouncing rumors a patient in Lashio died from A/H1N1. MOH refuses to discuss the status of the eight patients who allegedly have A/H1N1 (reftel); we learned from UN and private clinics that the three expatriates were tested and released and the five Burmese remain under hospital surveillance. Private clinics must still report all suspected cases to MOH, but government doctors will only test for A/H1N1 if the patient traveled from an infected area within 14 days and demonstrates severe flu-like symptoms. MOH has also reportedly decided that diplomats traveling to Nay Pyi Taw for official meetings should also be tested, though ministry has yet to announce such a policy. MOH continues to raise awareness by distributing a Burmese-language pamphlet on A/H1N1. End Summary.

No New Cases; MOH Denounces Death Rumors  
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12. (SBU) The July 1 New Light of Myanmar, the GOB's media mouthpiece, reported there are no new cases of A/H1N1 in Burma beyond the one already identified. The 13-year girl in question continues to receive treatment at Yangon General Hospital, and MOH officials continue to quarantine (at home) 14 people who had direct contact with the patient. During a meeting with private clinic staff on July 1, MOH Deputy Minister Dr. Mya Oo stated that MOH officials continue to conduct surveillance on 90 of the 91 passengers who were on the same flight from Singapore with the patient (one person remains unaccounted for), and while eight of the passengers have demonstrated flu-like symptoms, they all tested negative for A/H1N1.

13. (SBU) Dr. Mya Oo also denounced exile news reports of an A/H1N1 death in Lashio, Shan State. He emphasized the need for health providers to be open and transparent, and not spread "false rumors" that could rouse the public. Post has no independent confirmation of these exile reports.

#### MOH Mum on Alleged Cases

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14. (C) SOS Director Dr. Olivier Cattin confirmed that MOH has yet to respond to his repeated inquiries into the three suspected A/H1N1 cases -- one Australian and two Malaysians -- referred to MOH last week. The two Malaysians, who work for Petronas in Rangoon, told Dr. Cattin they were tested for A/H1N1 on July 1, but have yet to receive the results. Dr. Myo Lwin, WHO Influenza Specialist, told us on June 30 that the Australian patient received tamiflu treatment at Yangon

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General Hospital on June 23 and departed Burma the next day.

15. (C) Embassy contacts at the Yangon General Hospital confirm that five Burmese suspected of having A/H1N1 have been quarantined at the hospital since June 28. Dr. Myo Lwin told us MOH has yet to inform WHO of these cases.

#### New Testing Guidelines

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16. (SBU) On July 1, MOH Deputy Director Dr. Mya Oo emphasized in a meeting with private doctors that while non-state clinics should report all suspected cases to MOH, government doctors would determine who should be tested for A/H1N1. He outlined new criteria for A/H1N1 testing: only individuals traveling from infected areas within 14 days (compared to 10 days) who demonstrate severe influenza-like symptoms will be tested. Dr. Mya Oo stated that the National Influenza Lab has tested 27 samples for A/H1N1 using a conventional Polymerase Chain Reactor (PCR) machine and reagents provided by private Japanese donors.

17. (SBU) Dr. Mya Oo also reportedly announced at this session that all diplomats traveling to Nay Pyi Taw for official government meetings must also be tested for A/H1N1. (Note: MOH did not mention whether this policy applied to businessmen traveling to Nay Pyi Taw for meetings.) MOH has yet to inform the diplomatic community of this new policy. Some here wonder whether the GOB will apply its A/H1N1 policies to UNSYG Ban Ki Moon and party, who arrive July 3.

18. (C) Dr. Cattin surmised that MOH's new guidelines demonstrate the GOB's limited ability to test for A/H1N1. Government laboratory technicians told him they were concerned they would run out reagents, and that MOH's PCR machine was old and could not handle high test volumes.

#### Awareness Raising

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19. (SBU) MOH, in coordination with UNICEF, has produced a Burmese-language pamphlet on A/H1N1, which it is

disseminating to hospitals, clinics, and public areas (e.g., bus and train stations, tea shops). Embassy Rangoon made copies of this brochure available to all local and personal staff.

DINGER